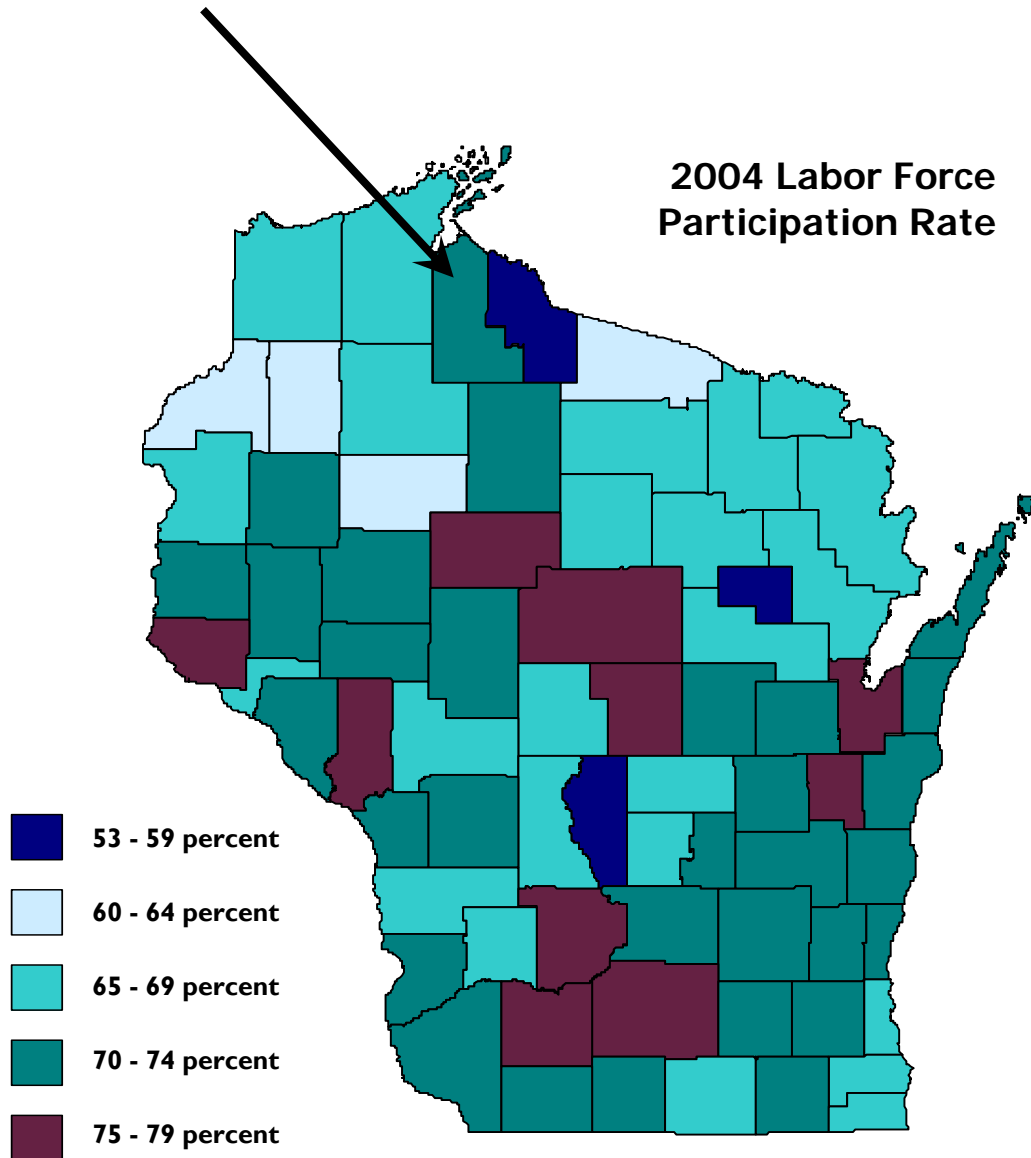


Ashland County Workforce Profile



Source: Estimates created by DWD, OEA using data supplied by
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Bureau of Census

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State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development
Office of Economic Advisors

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County Population and Labor Force

Since 2000 the population in Ashland County increased by 39 residents, the smallest gain in population among the 72 counties in the state although it is better than the loss in Milwaukee County. Even though the population increased over the five-year period, the county lost population from 2004 to 2005 and only one of the county's five largest municipalities added population since 2000.

Like many neighboring counties, Ashland is not gaining population from natural causes (births – deaths). Since 2000 the number of deaths exceeded births by five, the smallest decline among its neighbors. The reason population growth lags in Ashland County is that net migration is very low. The county added only 44 new residents from migration compared with 719 in Bayfield County or 490 in Price and 263 in Iron.

The lack of migration, which more often than not includes an increase in elderly residents, has kept the population in Ashland County younger than its neighbors. In 2005 roughly 25 percent of the labor force age population was aged 60 years or more and 19 percent were 16-24 years old. By 2020 the 60-plus population will increase to 33 percent of the labor force age population but this is much less than the 41-46 percent in the previously mentioned counties.

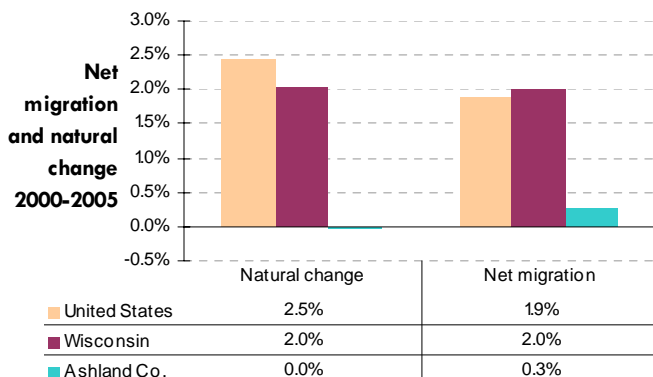
The age of the population is critical in terms of labor force participation. The labor force is a sum of factors that relate to the local population including much higher participation rates

Five largest municipalities in Ashland County

	April 2000 Census	Jan. 1, 2005 estimate	Numeric change	Percent change
Ashland County	16,866	16,905	39	0.2%
Ashland, City*	8,620	8,531	-89	-1.0%
Sanborn, Town	1,272	1,269	-3	-0.2%
White River, Town	892	943	51	5.7%
Jacobs, Town	835	821	-14	-1.7%
Mellen, City	845	818	-27	-3.2%

*Ashland County portion only

Source: Wis. Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services, August 2005

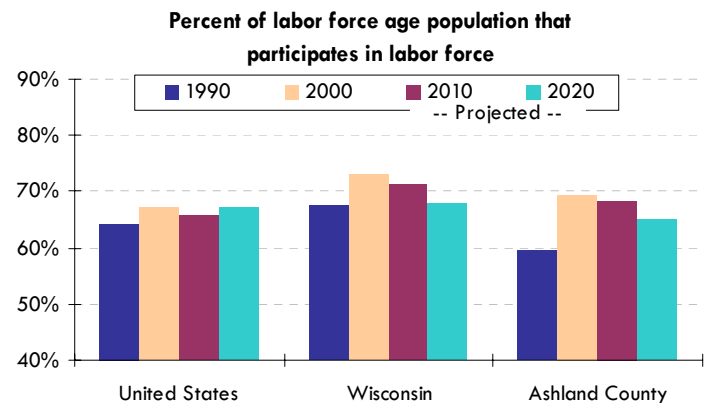


Source: WI Dept. of Admin., Demographic Services & US Census Bureau

Population and Labor Force

	United States	Wisconsin	Ashland County
Total population in 2000	281,424,602	5,363,715	16,866
Population est. Jan. 1, 2005	295,160,302	5,580,757	16,905
Change	13,735,700	217,042	39
% change	4.9%	4.0%	0.2%
2005 Labor force population*	224,837,000	4,339,938	13,163
Share of total population	76.2%	78%	77.9%
Labor force	147,125,000	3,071,179	9,417
Labor force participation rate	65.4%	70.8%	71.5%
2005 Population 16 yrs. & over	228,621,674	4,417,313	13,419
16-24 yrs old	37,489,370	743,764	2,567
Share of population 16+ yrs	16.4%	16.8%	19.1%
25-59 yrs old	142,248,896	2,708,865	7,471
Share of population 16+ yrs	62.2%	61.3%	55.7%
60 yrs and older	48,883,408	964,684	3,380
Share of population 16+ yrs	21.4%	21.8%	25.2%
Projected population: 2020	335,804,546	6,110,878	18,108
Population 16 yrs. & over	264,085,104	4,869,573	14,498
16-24 yrs old	37,918,865	681,586	1,854
Share of population 16+ yrs	14.4%	14.0%	12.8%
25-59 yrs old	150,678,402	2,756,884	7,861
Share of population 16+ yrs	57.1%	56.6%	54.2%
60 yrs and older	75,487,837	1,431,103	4,783
Share of population 16+ yrs	28.6%	29.4%	33.0%

* civilian population 16 yrs. and older not in an institution



Source: special tabulation by OEA using US Census, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, WI Dept. of Admin. estimates and projections

for middle-aged residents than either the young or elderly, lower participation rates for women, and declining participation from the white population. There is a possibility that the current labor force participation rate will increase slightly as baby-boomers choose to remain in the workforce instead of retiring but the increase will be short-lived. At best there would be no change from the current labor force but more probable is a labor force smaller than today's.

Revised Labor Force

The labor force in Ashland County in 2004 was at an all-time high with 9,417 participants. The number of unemployed residents in the county declined for the third consecutive year after climbing to a ten-year high of 677 in 2002. Over the 15 years there has been little change in the number of unemployed while employment has increased by more than 1,880.

All labor force estimates for 1990 to 2004 have been revised. The more recent years reflect trends revealed during Census 2000 while the 1990s were updated to include changes from 1990 to 2000 but are still based on ratios from the 1990 census and as a result, show a huge correction in Ashland County from 1999 to 2000.

Looking beyond the break in the series, the most significant increases in the Ashland County labor force occurred in the early 1990s when over a three-year period employment rose by more than 700 workers. The increase from 1992 through 1994 corresponds with job growth by county employers, especially those in manufacturing and gaming. The increase in jobs encouraged more labor force participation and dramatically changed the labor force participation rate from 59 percent in 1990 to 69 percent in 2000.

Ashland County Civilian Labor Force Estimates

	Labor force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployed rate
1990	7,574	6,977	597	7.9%
1991	7,586	6,895	691	9.1%
1992	7,798	7,149	649	8.3%
1993	8,005	7,366	639	8.0%
1994	8,258	7,608	650	7.9%
1995	8,049	7,517	532	6.6%
1996	8,222	7,649	573	7.0%
1997	8,294	7,755	539	6.5%
1998	8,066	7,456	610	7.6%
1999	7,876	7,286	590	7.5%
2000	8,920	8,453	467	5.2%
2001	9,170	8,636	534	5.8%
2002	9,308	8,631	677	7.3%
2003	9,298	8,638	660	7.1%
2004	9,417	8,858	559	5.9%

Source: DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, September 2005

Education Attainment

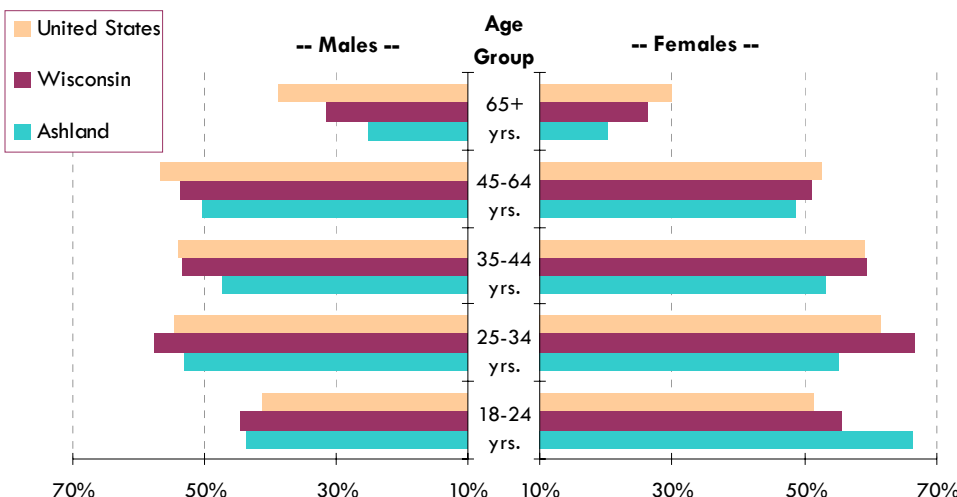
One of the most significant changes in employment that occurred during the last two decades was the shift from goods-producing to service-providing jobs. In tandem with this shift was the increase in demand for professional and technical workers employed in the high-skilled services industries and the aggregation of these jobs in larger metropolitan areas.

Much of the job growth in high-skilled service jobs occurred in

larger metropolitan areas while expansion in more rural economies produced lower-skilled service jobs and goods-producing jobs. The main exception in rural areas was job growth in health care and education, two industries with female-dominated professional and technical occupations. For most counties in Wisconsin, including Ashland, this explains why there is a greater proportion of females in each age group with post-secondary education than males.

As growth of skilled professional and technical jobs in metropolitan areas attracted individuals from many rural areas there was a concurrent increase in demand from employers for institutionally trained workers. This demand has led to a small increase among the younger population groups of those with post-secondary education. Compared with the United States and Wisconsin, Ashland County has a smaller share of population with post-secondary education in all age groups except those aged 18 to 24 years, probably due to students attending Northland College and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College.

Residents with post-secondary education



Source: US Census 2000, Summary file 3, QT-P20

Employment and Wages

Employers in the education (both private and public) and health services industry sector in Ashland County provide 26 percent of the jobs in the county and 31 percent of all payroll. In addition to the elementary and secondary education facilities that are found in all counties, Ashland County is home to Northland College, a campus of Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College and a large medical community. Even though the sector dominates employment, the average annual wage of \$32,303 falls short of similar wages in the state and increased only 0.7 percent in 2004 compared with an increase in the state of 3.9 percent.

Overall the annual average wage in Ashland County increased 3.8 percent in 2004, very similar to the 4.0 percent change in Wisconsin. Wages from several industry sectors; trade, transportation and utilities, professional and business services, and leisure and hospitality; increased faster in Ashland County than in the state but the sectors have fewer jobs and wages remain well below the counterpart average wages in the state. The greatest disparity in wages occurs in the information sector where the average wage of \$21,185 is only 52 percent of information wages in Wisconsin. This sector was also only one of three in Ashland County that lost jobs in 2004.

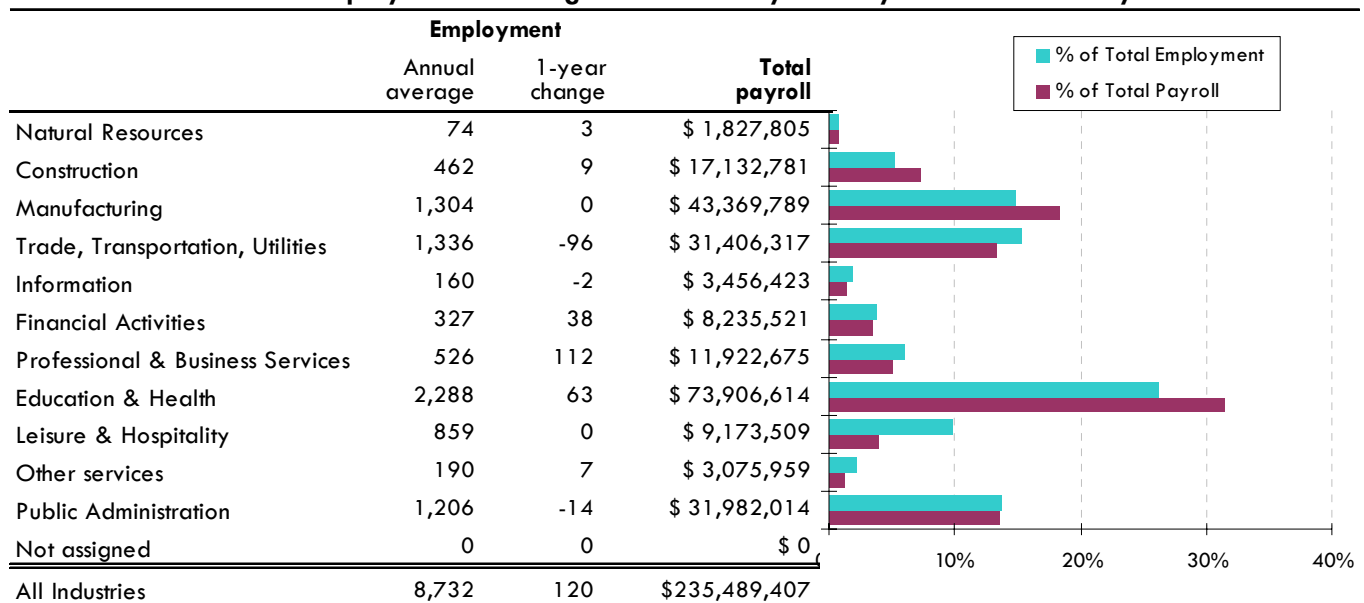
Average Annual Wage by Industry Division in 2004

	2004	2004		
	Average Annual Wage	Average Annual Wage	Percent of	1-year
	Wisconsin	Ashland County	Wisconsin	% change
All Industries	\$ 34,749	\$ 26,969	77.6%	3.8%
Natural resources	\$ 27,399	\$ 24,700	90.1%	-1.3%
Construction	\$ 41,258	\$ 37,084	89.9%	1.2%
Manufacturing	\$ 44,145	\$ 33,259	75.3%	5.2%
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	\$ 30,088	\$ 23,508	78.1%	5.3%
Information	\$ 41,759	\$ 21,603	51.7%	0.8%
Financial activities	\$ 45,103	\$ 25,185	55.8%	3.6%
Professional & Business Services	\$ 39,580	\$ 22,667	57.3%	12.7%
Education & Health	\$ 36,408	\$ 32,302	88.7%	0.7%
Leisure & Hospitality	\$ 12,295	\$ 10,679	86.9%	3.1%
Other services	\$ 20,207	\$ 16,189	80.1%	-2.7%
Public Administration	\$ 36,347	\$ 26,519	73.0%	7.7%

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

Overall, employers in Ashland County added 120 jobs in 2004. The change from 2003 of 1.4 percent exceeded the increase in the state of 0.9 percent. The greatest number of jobs, 112, were added by employers in professional and business services. The new jobs were primarily with existing business in the administrative and support group within the sector that includes temporary help agencies and telemarketing firms. Over one-third of the jobs in the sector are in this group in Ashland County and provide some insight into the low wages. Workers in this industry sector often work part-time and less than 52 weeks annually.

2004 employment and wage distribution by industry in Ashland County



Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Quarterly Census Employment and Wages, June 2005

Industry and Employers by Size

Top 10 Employers in Ashland County

Establishment	Product or Service	Size (Dec. 2004)
Bad River Band L Superior Chippewa	Tribal governments	250-499 employees
Memorial Medical Centr Inc	Gen. medical & surgical hospitals	250-499 employees
C G Bretting Mfg Co Inc	Paper industry machinery mfg.	250-499 employees
School District of Ashland	Elementary & secondary schools	250-499 employees
Wal-Mart Associates Inc	Discount department stores	100-249 employees
Northland College	Colleges & universities	100-249 employees
Columbia Forest Products Inc	Hardwood veneer & plywood mfg.	100-249 employees
County of Ashland	Executive & legislative offices, combined	100-249 employees
Lori Knapp Inc	Home health care services	100-249 employees
Bay Area Health LLC	Home health care services	100-249 employees

Source: DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, ES-202, July 2005

Prominent industries in Ashland County

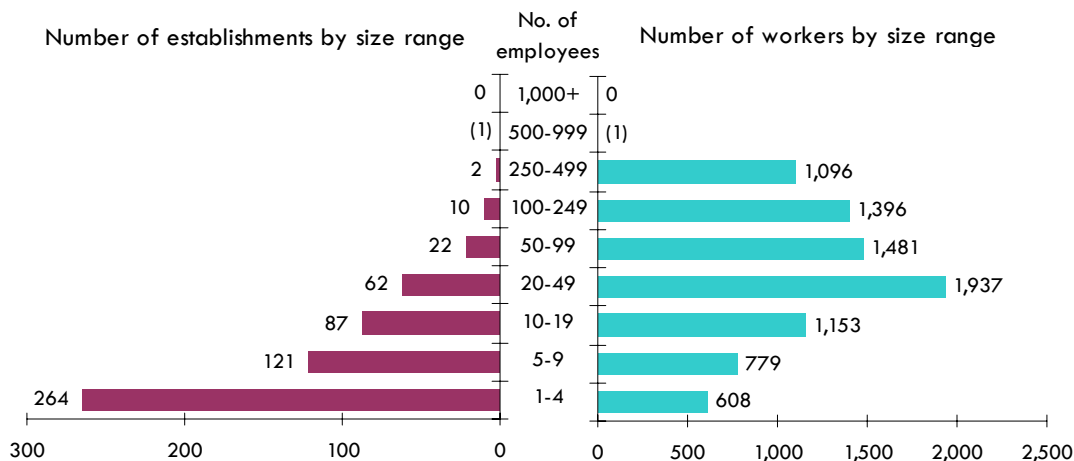
NAICS title	March 2005		Numeric change in employees	
	Establishments	Employees	2004-2005	2000-2005
Educational services	7	889	16	4
Executive, legislative, & gen government	21	764	-20	38
Food services and drinking places	50	607	26	-10
Wood product manufacturing	16	594	-34	-81
Hospitals	*	*	not avail.	not avail.
Machinery manufacturing	*	*	not avail.	not avail.
Ambulatory health care services	35	402	2	70
Social assistance	16	332	-10	98
Nursing and residential care facilities	5	306	-10	4
General merchandise stores	*	*	not avail.	not avail.

* data suppressed to maintain employer confidentiality

Column headings revised 02/06

Source: DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, ES-202, September 2005

Ashland County establishments and workers by employment size range in 2004



(1) Data not available due to suppression factors

Source: DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Table 221, July 2005

The county's largest industry sector, education and health services, with over 2,288 jobs, includes five of the county's largest employers and all four industry groups in the sector are on the prominent industries list. Two schools are among the seven education establishments with 889 workers, one hospital, and two home health providers are among the 16 social assistance establishments with 332 workers. Ambulatory health services includes smaller employers, mostly clinics, where the average employer has 11 workers.

Employment with the largest employer is included with executive, legislative and general government units, the second largest industry group. This includes all operations with the tribe. The third largest industry, food services and drinking places, has more establishments than any other industry group on the top ten list. However, with fewer than 12 workers per establishment, there are no large employers in the county.

In fact, only 13 employers, two percent of all employers in the county, have more than 100 employees yet they provide nearly 34 percent of all the jobs in Ashland County. Two-thirds of the establishments have fewer than ten workers and provide roughly 16 percent of the jobs in the county.

Per Capita Personal Income

The per capita personal income (PCPI) in 2003 in Ashland County of \$23,204 ranked 55th highest among Wisconsin's 72 counties. PCPI increased 3.1 percent in the last year and 16.6 percent since 1998. The percent change over last year exceeded an increase in PCPI in the state of 2.5 percent but the change since 1998 ranked 32nd in the state and lagged PCPI growth in the state of 17.2 percent. The PCPI in Ashland County remained well below the Wisconsin PCPI of \$30,685.

The per capita personal income report from the US Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, includes wages and salaries from job-holders, self-employed, proprietorships, and farmers. It also includes income from dividends, interest and rent; and income from transfer payments like social security, Medicaid, unemployment insurance, veteran's benefits, and welfare. The total of all these sources of income is divided by the total population to arrive at the per capita personal income.

Factors such as a higher share of residents without income (generally children), or residents on a fixed income (generally the elderly) can lower the PCPI. Another factor that heavily influences PCPI is net earnings, which comprise 70 percent of total personal income in the state and only 61 percent in Ashland County. Higher wages are the most significant factor in higher PCPI but other factors, like residents living on fixed incomes, contribute to lower PCPI.

In Ashland County total personal income in 2003 was \$388,742,000 up 2.8 percent from 2002 and 15.7 percent from 1998. The increases in

county income lagged increases in Wisconsin and the United States over both the one-year and five-year periods. Income losses from dividends, interest, and rent was offset by gains in wages and salaries and transfer payments. The adjustment for wages paid to who live outside of Ashland County also increased in 2003 to \$55,338,000.

Wisconsin Counties 2003 Per Capita Personal Income and Rank in State

Area	2003	Rank	5-yr growth	Rank	Area	2003	Rank	5-yr growth	Rank
United States	\$ 31,472		17.1%		Manitowoc	\$ 27,807	27	13.6%	59
Wisconsin	\$ 30,685		17.2%		Marathon	\$ 29,992	16	22.0%	5
Adams	\$ 22,804	59	16.1%	37	Marinette	\$ 25,448	39	21.3%	9
Ashland	\$ 23,204	55	16.6%	32	Marquette	\$ 22,590	64	26.5%	1
Barron	\$ 24,922	41	15.2%	44	Menominee	\$ 18,449	72	19.8%	16
Bayfield	\$ 22,660	62	13.4%	60	Milwaukee	\$ 31,419	7	19.5%	18
Brown	\$ 32,076	5	17.8%	25	Monroe	\$ 23,467	54	16.8%	31
Buffalo	\$ 29,083	20	17.2%	28	Oconto	\$ 24,842	42	12.3%	66
Burnett	\$ 22,796	60	17.1%	29	Oneida	\$ 28,646	22	18.7%	21
Calumet	\$ 31,880	6	21.4%	8	Outagamie	\$ 30,952	11	20.5%	14
Chippewa	\$ 25,999	36	12.3%	67	Ozaukee	\$ 47,527	1	14.7%	48
Clark	\$ 22,227	66	13.9%	55	Pepin	\$ 24,407	44	13.0%	64
Columbia	\$ 30,846	12	18.2%	24	Pierce	\$ 27,963	26	18.6%	23
Crawford	\$ 22,628	63	20.9%	13	Polk	\$ 24,201	46	13.9%	54
Dane	\$ 36,455	3	21.0%	12	Portage	\$ 27,464	30	21.1%	11
Dodge	\$ 26,048	35	13.3%	61	Price	\$ 24,361	45	12.2%	68
Door	\$ 30,657	13	15.9%	40	Racine	\$ 31,271	8	15.0%	45
Douglas	\$ 23,568	53	15.3%	43	Richland	\$ 23,829	51	21.9%	6
Dunn	\$ 22,885	58	14.9%	47	Rock	\$ 28,256	25	14.1%	50
Eau Claire	\$ 27,469	29	17.5%	27	Rusk	\$ 20,461	71	14.0%	52
Florence	\$ 24,146	47	25.3%	3	Sauk	\$ 28,780	21	19.5%	19
Fond du Lac	\$ 29,951	17	16.1%	38	Sawyer	\$ 23,921	50	22.3%	4
Forest	\$ 21,975	68	25.4%	2	Shawano	\$ 23,941	49	13.9%	56
Grant	\$ 24,116	48	15.6%	42	Sheboygan	\$ 31,251	9	19.8%	17
Green	\$ 28,542	23	14.0%	51	St. Croix	\$ 31,091	10	13.6%	57
Green Lake	\$ 26,962	32	8.1%	72	Taylor	\$ 23,020	56	16.6%	34
Iowa	\$ 27,308	31	19.2%	20	Trempealeau	\$ 25,242	40	18.7%	22
Iron	\$ 22,912	57	21.1%	10	Vernon	\$ 20,950	70	15.7%	41
Jackson	\$ 26,084	34	21.9%	7	Vilas	\$ 25,664	37	13.0%	63
Jefferson	\$ 29,330	18	16.5%	35	Walworth	\$ 27,626	28	13.6%	58
Juneau	\$ 22,382	65	12.7%	65	Washburn	\$ 22,794	61	16.0%	39
Kenosha	\$ 29,117	19	16.5%	36	Washington	\$ 35,196	4	14.9%	46
Kewaunee	\$ 25,536	38	8.8%	71	Waukesha	\$ 41,551	2	12.2%	69
La Crosse	\$ 28,284	24	16.8%	30	Waupaca	\$ 26,863	33	14.0%	53
Lafayette	\$ 21,983	67	10.1%	70	Waushara	\$ 21,762	69	13.2%	62
Langlade	\$ 23,739	52	20.4%	15	Winnebago	\$ 30,359	15	16.6%	33
Lincoln	\$ 24,725	43	14.6%	49	Wood	\$ 30,401	14	17.7%	26

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, May 2005